

# HISTORICAL BULLETIN

No. 6 OCTOBER 1950

TULARE COUNTY HISTORICAL SOCIETY  
701 Watson Avenue Visalia, California

President \_\_\_\_\_ Harold G. Schutt, Lindsay  
Vice President \_\_\_\_\_ Walter Stuckel, Tulare  
Vice President \_\_\_\_\_ Mrs. W. L. Lankin, Porterville  
Secretary \_\_\_\_\_ Miss Anne R. Mitchell  
701 Watson Ave., Visalia  
Treasurer \_\_\_\_\_ A. D. Sweet, Visalia  
Director \_\_\_\_\_ Joseph E. Doctor, Exeter  
Director \_\_\_\_\_ A. B. Dickey, Dinuba

The Tulare County Historical Society is a voluntary, non-profit organization devoted to the study and spread of information about local history. All who are interested in this subject are urged to become members. Please send the secretary a list of those in your community to whom an invitation should be sent. Dues are one dollar and fifty cents for the period ending December 31, 1951. Thereafter one dollar per calendar year.

## BIG TREES ...

Probably the only modest description ever applied by California. Maybe the sight of these trees has so awed all beholders that normal powers of exaggeration have been dulled.

California's pride and which to show Big Trees to strangers was awakened early and as far back as 1834 the bark was stripped from a tree in the Calaveras Grove to be reassembled on a framework. The Centennial Exhibition at Philadelphia in 1876, The World's Columbian Exposition at Chicago in 1893 and other big fairs have had their exhibits of Big Trees. At first they were greeted with skepticism but gradually the reports of eye-witnesses and the general distribution of photographs overcame doubts and California's Big Trees were accepted as facts.

Sequoias were cut for lumber

as early as 1834 and the pure became so fast that in the 40's there was fear that all would be destroyed and the formation of General Grant and Sequoia National Parks in 1890 was the result of agitation of local people led by George Stewart, then publisher of the Visalia Delta.

This Bulletin attempts to bring together some unpublished material and reveal scattered references that have been printed but which no longer have circulation. It does not tell the story very completely. No doubt there are some errors of fact and many errors of omission. The Society would like to obtain additional statements that can be filed to round out the record.

We hope it will lead to the eventual publishing of an adequate story of the big mills in Fresno County, centering at Millwood and Home.

## Early Sawmills In Northern Tulare County

Wallace Elliott, who published the earliest general history of Tulare County in 1881, gives quite a detailed account of early sawmills, starting with Smith and Hatch who started a mill on the Whitaker Ranch in 1818. West Horton, in a mill on the Woodlake Ranch says this was at Millwood because names of mills, owners and places changed so much it would be misleading to repeat Elliott's story. It can be summarized by saying that mills have been operating in the lower timber since the 30's and 40's. Edmund Valley and the area below General Grant Park have had many mills. There was one at Whitaker Forest about 1870. The names that are encountered are Thomas, Osborn, Barton, Hyde, Hart, Wagy. There was the Furline mill, People's mill, Phoenix

mill, etc. Most of them were small.

After 1881 the record is clearer. In that year Smith Comstock contracted with S. Sweet and Co. of Visalia, who constructed the Wagy mill, to cut lumber at Hitchcock Meadows, near Happy Gap, above Meadow Flat. In 1882, Comstock bought the mill and moved it up to "Big Stump" which is very close to the present main entrance to General Grant Park. It operated there for six years and during this time one of the finest stands of sugar pine in the mountains was cut from the present Wilsonia area. Sequoia and yellow pine and probably fir were also cut. The mill was moved down stream two or three times and at one time was operated by J. C. Stanfield. Comstock opera-

(Continued on Page 4)

## Felling A Big Tree



FELLING A Big Tree at Mountain Home, probably about 1900. Earl McDonald on right.

## WORLD'S FAIR TREE

An Interview with James Patten

By HAROLD G. SCHUTT

The most ambitious "Big Tree" exhibit was that shown at the World's Columbian Exposition at Chicago in 1893 (originally scheduled for 1892). The tree was a part of the U. S. government exhibit. A contract was made by Burr Mitchell of Minneapolis to cut a big Sequoia and prepare the parts to be used. Mr. Ball of Le Grand contracted to build a road and haul the material to the railroad. The tree selected was the "General Noble" and was located about three miles north of the north west corner of General Grant Park.

Little description of the cutting of the tree is needed because it is shown so vividly by the pictures which are included in this Bulletin. These pictures taken by C. C. Curtis are as sharp in detail as ones taken today and have been presented by Mr. Patten to the Tulare County Museum.

The tree was cut off about fifty feet above the ground and James Patten will never forget the experience of the moment when the tree fell. It did not go as planned. The trunk slipped back onto the stump and broke the scaffold. Patten and the three others doing the cutting jumped onto the stump but couldn't stand even

in the middle for twenty minutes because of the vibration.

The tree was felled and the "claws" cut with the bark and about six inches of wood. Then a section about two feet thick was cut off the remaining stump and then another set of fourteen foot staves was prepared. These parts were all marked and crated and hauled out to Manson for shipment to Chicago. The stump, fifty feet above the ground, was fifteen feet six inches lower at the top of the twenty foot stump which was left when the job was done. This relic is now called the "Chicago" stump.

Efforts have been made to find out what happened to the exhibit after the fair closed as it was understood that it had been moved. After hearing that it went to Washington, Senator Knowland was asked to secure such information as he could. The following was furnished by the Legislative Reference Service of the Library of Congress under date of March 14, 1934.

"Chicago World's Fair Section of Grant Sequoia Tree"

"The section of Grant Sequoia, originally cut for exhibit at the (Continued on Page 2)

# CENTENNIAL TREES

California's Big Trees weren't well known when the United States celebrated a century of independence with its first big fair at Philadelphia in 1876. What would permit the fair visitor to visualize these trees better than to exhibit a section of the trunk of a tree? A solid section couldn't be transported but the next best thing was done. Mrs. McGee reports, "In 1875, Martin Vivian cut a big Sequoia near the General Grant with axes, a sixteen foot section was cut out and split into pie shaped pieces taking care to preserve the bark. They then split the heart out of each piece leaving a rim of bark and sapwood. These outer pieces were hauled out to Happy Gap (near present Sequoia Lake) and Traver to Cross Creek and shipped to Philadelphia."

Mrs. McGee's uncle, Israel Gamlin, had a squatter's timber claim in this area and he, with Mrs. McGee's father, Tom Gamlin, Polcy Kananewer and probably others, helped cut the tree. Vivian was not well-to-do and probably had some financial backing but there is no information about outside sponsors.

Jesse Patten says that Sam and Bill Harp, Huse Campbell and John Moore hauled the exhibit to the railroad. He recalls that when he first went to the mountains that it was a fad to fashion canes from sticks split from the centennial log.

Park records confirm the general information above but mention no names. Since Vivian cut this tree on government land without permission tradition says that he was sentenced to a year in federal prison. Wallace Elliott in "History of Tulare County" (1883) says he was fined fifty dollars but should have been jailed for life for his vandalism.

The most interesting thing about the exhibit was the lack of enthusiasm that it encountered at the fair. People were skeptical and couldn't believe that a tree could grow so big. They pointed to the places the log was split as proof that many small trees had been fitted together. A typical California hoax.

There is also a "Centennial" stump at Mountain Home. This tree was cut by John McKiernan, J. R. Hubbs, and Ed Manley as a commercial venture, admission being charged when it exhibited. This tree was cut off high above the ground, hollowed out, the rim sawed into sections and

taken out via Happy Camp, Pine Springs, Rancho and Mountain View. (ie the Kneels Mill road). It was shipped from Tulare by rail to San Francisco where it was exhibited at Woodward Gardens and thence routed west to the Centennial one by one the partners withdrew from the enterprise. First Manley, then McKiernan and before the tree left San Francisco Hubbs sold out for two thousand dollars, three thousand dollars less than the cost of preparation. A financial fiasco and tradition says the new owners had no better luck.

The above information is summarized from a paper prepared in 1923 by Mrs. Jay Brown. She had difficulty securing information and had to rely on much hearsay evidence. Her information was that the tree was cut in 1875. There are a number of printed references in this exhibit that agree in most aspects but either do not mention the date of cutting or place it in 1878, which would, of course, be too late for the Centennial.

Wallace Elliott in his "History of Tulare County" has considerable detail about the project but gives no date. The very next paragraph tells of the Vivian tree which was referred to earlier. If the McKiernan-Hubbs-Manley tree also was sent to the centennial surely Elliott would have known and mentioned the fact.

"Business Directory and Historical and Descriptive Handbook of Tulare County, California, 1883" published by Pillsbury and Ellsworth at Tulare, gives a similar account and states that the tree was cut in 1878. This same story is repeated in "Ten Pictures," a history of Fresno, Tulare and Kern Counties, published in 1891. It is difficult to locate evidence to overcome these three almost contemporary records. If the tree had been sent to the Centennial Exhibit on one would expect these histories, published only a few years later, to mention the fact. The tradition that this was a "Centennial" tree is very strong and goes back at least to the 1890's.

At the request of the Society the Free Library of Philadelphia searched the material in its files and has sent the following quotations:

"Agricultural Building—In this building there will also be a display of all the products of the forest, both in primary and secondary form, and it is proposed

## World's Fair Tree

(Continued from Page 1)

World's Columbian Exposition at Chicago in 1893, and later set up on the grounds of the Department of Agriculture in Washington, D. C., was dismantled and moved to the Arlington Experiment Farm on the Virginia side of the Potomac River during the winter of 1931-32. It was never re-assembled, but rested there in storage for several years. No record of its final disposal is available, but it seems to have been destroyed. No one was found who could show whether this was before or after January 30, 1942, when the Army took over the Arlington Experiment Farm. Prior to this date, all the agricultural work with the records of research had been moved to the Agricultural Research Center at Beltsville, Maryland.

The record is clear that the section was moved to the Arlington Experiment Farm, but thereafter nothing concerning disposal of the section could be found. Moreover, no piece of the section was placed with the wood exhibit in the Smithsonian Institution.

The following statement is copied from page 32 of the Official Record, United States Department of Agriculture, for January 30,

that the bark of one or more of the giant trees of California be taken off the trunk in segments and sections, to be placed on arrival on a skeleton frame of the same dimensions as the original. Agricultural Hall having an elevation of 75 feet, will give room for an exhibit of one of these monster trees."

"Hand-book to the Centennial Grounds and Fairmount Park. Where to go and what to see." Philadelphia 1876, page 4.

"The big trees of California, for which the country is famed, were here represented by a piece of bark about eighteen inches thick taken from one of these monster red-woods. Photographs of them were shown, which gave a very good idea of their gigantic proportions."

"The Centennial Exposition . . . Philadelphia, Hubbard Bros. 1876, pages 216-262.

"Also, the big tree of California is a slide show, and one must pay 25-cents admittance. If he sees it at all! It stands in a line with other monstrosities—big cattle, and little did we imagine that anything so venerable as a big California tree could be guilty of so disreputable a prank!" The Republican, Springfield, (Mass), July 24, 1876. (clippings)

1932:

## Big Redwood Put In Storage

"The 30-foot high section of the trunk of one of the giant California Sequoia trees which has stood on a concrete base in The Mall in Washington, in front of the Department of Agriculture main building, for the past 28 years has been taken down and stored at Arlington Experiment Farm, just across the Potomac from Washington, to keep it out of the weather until another suitable location is found for it. This huge hollow cylinder of timber, which may possibly have been a husky sapling in King Solomon's day, 10 centuries B. C., was moved because it was in the way in the Government building program.

"The section was cut for display in the Government exhibit at the World's Columbian Exposition in Chicago in 1892. The tree grew on the boundary line between Fresno and Tulare Counties, Calif. From records which Dr. W. A. Taylor, chief of the Bureau of Plant Industry, was able to find, the tree stood some 200 feet high in the forest, the section was hollowed out in California, and the great hollow pieces of wood was cut into 50 pieces for shipment to Chicago. Each piece being equivalent to a log 4 to 5 feet through and 14 feet long. The section was cut 30 feet above the ground level where it grew, and it is 26 feet in diameter and 85 feet in circumference. (Note: Patten recollection is 30 feet with checks with stump) At the exposition the section was set up in the Government Exhibit, a spiral stairway was run from the bottom to the top on the interior, and many visitors to the fair viewed the exhibit from the vantage point thus afforded.

"After the exposition the section was shipped to Washington, and in 1894 it was placed in The Mall where it has been an object of interest to the thousands of visitors to the National Capital who come its way."

It is hoped that the exhibit has not been destroyed. Probably the bark was falling from the trunk after 28 years in the open in Washington. The picture seems to indicate wires around the tree to keep loose bark in place. But this could be replaced at relatively small expense and some museum could have a marvelous "Big Tree" exhibit. Incidentally the picture of the tree in Washington was found in some old files of the Tulare County Board of Trade, stored in the basement of the Visalia Municipal Auditorium.

## Hud. Barton Pioneer

My father, Hudson D. Barton, was one of Tulare County's historians but he sent his diary, letters, newspaper articles, etc., to the State Historical Library in Sacramento many years ago. The reason he did was he decided Tulare County's Historical Society would have no place to keep records in his time. I have only a few articles that he wrote after that and happenings remembered from the facts told by my pioneer family, the Bartons.

My father came to Tulare County in the fall of 1865. Most of his summers after that were spent helping build and run saw mills. The Hyde Mill, now Whitaker Forest; The Wagy Mill at Meadow Flat. It was here at Meadow Flat that Bud Barton made the first Sequoia into lumber, but I will tell this story in his own words published in the Fresno Bee, November 22, 1926.

"In 1869, I myself saw the first Sequoia Gigantea ever made into lumber in the big tree belt.

"However, this tree was not felled by the woodman's axe. On New Year's night, 1868, this tree slipped its moorings in what is now known as Whitaker Forest and floated down Rahon Creek lodging a mile below Meadow Flat. For 2 or 3 weeks previous to New Year's day, it had been raining and the whole side of the mountain north of Rahon Creek had slid in an avalanche into the creek damming up the waters. On New Year's night the dam broke and the whole mass came down in a mighty rush. The trees and rocks may still be seen strewn all along the canyon of Rahon Creek, below Redwood Mountain.

"This tree was only six feet in diameter. If it had been much larger we could not have handled it with the milling equipment then used. At that time I was sawyer in the old Turbine Mill built by Jasper (Barley) Harrell. With a double circular saw we cut the tree into three logs lengthwise. Abe Murray, Sr. spoke for the lumber before the tree was hauled from the creek. Murray had the lumber hauled to Visalia and with it built his house on the Murray ranch in 1870."

In 1874 the Hud Barton family, my father, mother and their three little boys, moved to Cedar Spring and built a mill and a home. The mill had to be built first to make lumber for other buildings, etc. That meant camping out. The first night was spent on the bank of Cedar Creek. An animal walked over the foot of their bed in the

## SAW MILLS ON TULE RIVER

A few years ago a group in the Porterville High School under the leadership of Miss Ida Silver compiled a "History of Porterville". It is a very creditable piece of work that should be duplicated in other towns. One chapter deals with the lumbering industry.

This group found that the first sawmill on the Tule, at least in the redwood belt, was in the Dillonwood area on the North Tule river. This first mill started not later than 1865, was owned by J. R. Hubbs and operated by water power. N. P. Dillon purchased the mill and installed steam power. Lumber was brought out on a tramway using wooden rails.

night. Father insisted that it was a hog but he got up first the next morning and covered the bear tracks before mother could see them. They moved camp that day just a little farther away from Old Burin's beaten path.

This mill was run by a water wheel and an upright saw. The lumber was mostly pine and some cedar. Barton sold all the lumber at the mill. This brought a number of people in. Some families came to camp awhile and get away from camp heat and mosquitoes of the valley. One woman, who had spent most of her life in San Francisco, only stayed over night for the place was altogether too wild and primitive for her. She didn't see what kept us children from going completely wild. Father solemnly swore that he chased us down with the dogs every Sunday morning to put clean clothes on us, then turned us loose to run wild for another week. Then too, our neighbors, the nearest six miles away, would come for a little lumber and stay over night for a visit. Among these were Tom Gamlin, wife and baby daughter Liza (Mrs. Mettee). So you see friendship too passes down thru the years. The Hud Barton's were there eight years in all, three of us Barton youngsters were born there, then father sold out to his brother Elias Barton, and his brother-in-law, Bob Hardin, who ran the little mill four years more. All the available timber was cut at the end of twelve years and the mill was left standing until the winter of 1892 when Sontag and Evans burned all the buildings after taking a few boards to house in their Fort Defiance, less than a mile up the canyon. Thus passed into history perhaps the smallest, and for its size, the most profitable mill ever built in these mountains.

Oriana Barton Wrought

the cars coming down by gravity and being hauled up by mules. This was later replaced by a flume. Both terminated just north of the old control station, where the Balch Park road starts up the mountain. About 1900 the Enterprise Mill was moved from Mountain Home to Dillonwood and operated on and off until 1914. Four years ago a new road was built to this section and logs are now being hauled to a Springville mill.

The second mill to come into the Tule river country was brought by ox-team from Santa Clara county about 1870, by Charles F. Wilson. It was set up at Happy Camp on the headwaters of Rancheria Creek. J. Kincaid bought it at auction in 1876 for \$100.00 and a year later sold it to Rand and Horton. A. M. Coburn bought Rand's interest and operated it for several years. It was moved several times, finally to a point below Mountain Home. Coburn built a flume down Bear Creek and had his "dump" on Horton's place. (Afterwards this was known as the Pete Planchon or Jake Garner place.) For many years Coburn operated a finishing mill at Springville, near the Soda Spring. Later he was County Clerk of Tulare County.

L. B. Frazier built the first mill at Mountain Home. Frazier, a promoter of some ability, built a road from Mito and Rancheria up Bear Creek to the site of the mill. He moved a mill from the Pine Ridge area above Toiyuan in Fresno County to Mountain Home and operated it a short while in 1883. Charles Doty helped haul the mill and drove bull teams to skid logs to the mill. Frazier went broke and left the county. The mill passed to Pease, Newport and Jerrard. Frazier came back in 1885 and blockaded the road he had built, hoping to collect tolls, but some of those who had not been paid for their work tore down the barricade and in the confusion the county acquired title to the road. It is still used as a fire protection road but is very steep. The Frazier mill burned in 1888.

The Enterprise mill, the largest in this area, was erected in 1897 about a mile above Mountain Home, but operated only a short time because the company had only 50 acres of timber. The sawdust piles just above "Hercules", the tree with the room cut out of its heart indicate the site of this mill.

Charles Elster purchased the

Coburn mill in 1898 and later purchased other mills and consolidated them just north of the present buildings at Mountain Home. A Mr. Conlee operated a mill at Brownie Meadow which is also in the immediate vicinity.

These mills cut pine, fir and redwood. Very few big trees were cut that exceeded sixteen feet in diameter. They were cut ten or twelve feet above the ground, two men ordinarily would fall a big tree in two or three days. An under cut was made, it was sawed from the opposite side and wedged over. The redwood being brittle was often badly shattered in falling and the logs had to be divided into sections either by splitting or blasting in order to go thru the saws in the mills. Most of these mills had two circular saws, one above the other and slightly behind. For a time the Dillonwood mill had a "splitter", a long drag saw that cut big logs endwise.

Lumber from the Mountain Home mills, except Coburn's, was hauled down to the valley by teams. The mountain teamster was a very skilled man and guided his animals by word of mouth as much as by his "jerk line". Lumber at the mill was about ten dollars per thousand. Many of the old houses in the county are built of redwood from these mills and generally are still quite sound because termites do not attack this lumber.

Many people used to spend their vacations around the mountain sawmills. Lumber to build a little cabin didn't cost much and the grain farmers, when the harvest was in, went to the mills for several weeks. Fred Wells, of Tulare, recalls that six or seven hundred people camped about Mountain Home and in 1887 three babies were born there. J. J. Doyle started his Summer Home resort in 1890 and actually sold lots for cabin sites. This area is now Balch Park.

Mountain Home, which originally applied only to the resort operated by A. J. Doty near the Feidler mill is the name now applied to a large area south of Mount Moses. It is a State Forest mostly purchased from Michigan interests who had acquired the land after the mills discussed in this paper had ceased operations.

There was one mill on the South Fork of Tule river about two miles below Rogers Camp south west of Camp Nelson. It was probably started in the 70's and in 1884 was being operated by Porter Putnam. Coburn is supposed to have purchased this mill.

## Early Sawmills In Northern Tulare County

(Continued from Page 1)

ted other mills in the mountains and in Mexico. At Atwell's mill on the Mineral King road he cut the lumber for the first flume of the Mt. Whitney Power Company. His daughter, Mrs. Ectin Simmons, still owns some timberland near the park, and has her summer home, "Comstock Lodge," on the property.

During the time that Comstock was at Big Stump, Moore and Smith commenced operations at Millwood and this became the biggest operation in this part of the state. In 1889 a dam was constructed at Meadow Flat and Sequoia Lake was formed. The water was used at the mill and to operate a flume that extended sixty miles to Burger. This company and its successors logged the Convex Basin and around the mountain to Hume. These mills were in Fresno County.

## Who Was Van Doorman?

Mr. and Mrs. A. P. Hubbs, of Visalia, told the writer of a Mr. Van Doorman who in the summer of 1892 had a big tree felled and sections hauled out and shipped, presumably to the World's Fair of Chicago. They recall him as being very reticent about his plans, and many times their curiosity has made them wonder about him. At the time of the interview nothing was said about there being more to the proposed exhibit than a large cross section of the trunk about one foot thick.

In "Ten Pictures of the Garden of the World", published in 1892 there is quite a detailed description of the Neal Van Doorman exhibit which is stated to have already reached San Francisco on its way to Chicago. We quote a paragraph: "The entire piece of wood consists of sixteen sections as follows: The lower section is one foot in height by twenty feet in diameter, all in one solid cut, weighing 18,125 pounds. This will be arranged as a floor, placed on nine elegantly carved and enormous pedestals made of the same tree. The next is seven feet in height by twenty feet in diameter, which is hollowed out and will be placed on the floor cut. The last and final cut is one foot high and similar in every respect to the floor cut. The whole of

(Continued on Page 5)

## BUZZARD'S ROOST TO OLD ADAM

(This paper was given by Mrs. Lizzie at a picnic at Big Stump on August 27, 1950.)

Buzzard Roost was a forsaken desert plain in the early 1880's. It lay midway between the barren Coast Range Mountains to the west and those lovely Sierra Nevada Mountains to the east. We lived out there, three miles south of the Roost, amid a flock of kin-folks that had traveled from Iowa to California, from Oregon to the Mexican border, and then they came to rest in that desolate place, where even grasshoppers had to eat the fence posts to survive. It was hot and dry down there out in 1885 and the families decided to come up to Old Adam. Grandpa and Uncle Arley Purcell each owned a timber claim that included this old stump. At this date Buzzard Roost has blossomed into full bloom as Waukena.

Old Adam looks exactly as he did in 1885 but he has a new title and a stately trim of young Sequoias about him. He's thurst Monarch now, and there he stands in front of us, just as firmly set and as sturdy as he was 65 years ago, and he looks exactly as he did then.

Well the several families of us got themselves loaded into an assortment of vehicles with hay, grub and bedding, and flocks of gleeful children squeezing into place the best they could. Teams of variously colored mules or horses started out with us in tow for the long hot trip up to where we now are. A dog followed under the wagon; a water bucket and a black camp cooking kettle swung under the rear end of the wagon bed. Rinds for the most part were just wagon trails. If one wore out some wagon made a parallel track and a new road got under way. We went through Tulare and on through Visalia. Here we stopped for one camp, at the old flour mill way out east of town. The Santa Fe depot was near the site now. On the way north of Visalia we turned east into a lane fenced on each side with piled up logs, redwood, oak, cedar and other mountain debris. These had been sorted down the Kaweah River from the high mountains during the raging floods of the 1860's. We went angling across the plains to Colver's Point, now Red Banks. On the way we traveled among fields of low willows, dodging around one as best we could, with the wagon lurching along to meet another log hill. The Twin Buttes held out attention, sturdy lonely looking little hills way out on the valley floor. In camp at evening time the little turkulets or

ground owls hovered over us in plaintive salute. Coo-o-o, Coo-o-o, deliciously sad and appealing. Coyotes joined in a wretchedly waiting debate from one arena to another. Sleep came to tired travelers to the tunes of these musicians of the plains.

We traveled up the Cottonwood past Hungry Hollow, and on to mountain roads. These went along easily traveled inclines, then up over steep mountains, dodging rock ledges, past interesting scenes, up and onto dangerous looking spots, just wherever a horse could get a footing and a wagon could be drawn along without upsetting. We passed the cup and saucer rock, came within sight of the three owl cliffs on Owl Mountain. Ever upward behind tired twenty horses we finally reached Rattlesnake Divide, and down the Rattlesnake grade. It was a terribly steep incline. It looked dangerous and sounded poisonous. Near the foot of the Rattlesnake Grade we crossed Cottonwood Creek. Here, during the winter of 1885, and during high flood waters, Mr. Bliss of Visalia was drowned. He carried the mail between Camp Badger and Visalia. He rode his horse into the foaming swirling stream. They both went under the horse went out and Bliss dropped from him on the bank, dead.

After more uphill we came to a mountain settlement. The Cottonwood School there, housed forty or more pupils. Bud Barton and his brother put up the building. Had made the furniture from odds and ends of salvaged material. He taught the school, using miscellaneous books that had been brought across the plains in covered wagons. The Cottonwood was one of the very first public schools in Tulare County.

The Barton boys, Frank and Bert, raised watermelons, and had at stand at the turn of the road across from the house. How delicious those melons were to a hungry tired dust covered traveler as he passed by and stopped to eat one.

A few more up and a few more turns and we began to find really rough roads. Rock Rock was a turn to be negotiated carefully. Horses had to pull out on a slick rock to steer the wagon away from the bank. In time we came to the Sam and Dan Perry ranch. It was named Frame Flat, and was an inviting overnight camping place. Sam Perry was a voluntary undertaker for the nearby mon-

tainers who passed on to eternity. In those days when a neighbor died someone came in and laid him out, put a coin on each eye to keep it shut, covered him with a sheet and made funeral arrangements. All this Sam did free of charge. A comforting neighbor, he was.

Leaving Frame Flat we came to Buckskin Pitch, a tough hill that took out good team work and a good driver who often used pet swear phrases to get a spurt of power out of a team. On up we faced Devil's Slide. How the name! Maybe too many swear words. I don't know. On this slide an Italian tourist was killed. He lost control of the wagon and attempted to bank it. It hauled at right, and upset hurling him forward beneath a wheel lengthwise. His full length was crushed. Up, on up we climbed to Badger Saddle and down to Camp Badger. This was a lovely camping place, meadows, a refreshing stream and people living a beautiful life. The Weather family ran an eating place and Woodards had the Post Office and a store.

From here we climbed to Hags Bark Bend, then skirted around south under Langer Point Ridge to Log Ridge. Here teamsters watered and rested before making the long climb ahead. First came a pitch called Harderabon. From here on campers witnessed some perfect freight team performances. The Double B road lay ahead. It was steep and crooked. The steady snail thump of the step, step, step, altogether, to the rhythm of tingling bells on the harness of the lead horse was most fascinating. The click-clack of the butt chains, clivers, and hip links, and various other metals that held with the steps and bells and squeaking leather. The iron tied wheels bumped and grated along under a heavy load, over rocks and side hills. In the wake of something precious that has been lost forever—the evenly spaced footprints of a burdened team of horses and their harness chokes. At any rate on the rightly named Double B Road, it was "Yee-a-Nig; get over" morning, "jump the chain", or "How Yum, jump". To bring the wagon around a curve without banking the wheels or cramping the wagon. Not all horses could be trained to be a successful freight animal, not could all men attain to the high calling of a good mountain driver. Woodwards were on the lookout for these big freight teams, and at the first sign of meeting one, like the flicking of bells, screeching of brakes, or grating of

(Continued on Page 5)

## Buzzard Roost To Old Adam

(Continued from Page 4)

wheels, we called: "Pa! Pa! hurry up and get over, the bulls are comin'!" Well, Pa was already hurrying to a good safe turnout, for small outfits must give right of way to heavily loaded freighters if we were to get to Old Adam in a happy frame of mind. Above the SS we traveled an easier stretch of road. Down on Dry Creek far below was Grassy Meadows, farther on we reached Camel Back or Purrell Saddle.

Traveling, always upward, we reached Comstock Saddle, now Big Stamp. Under the shadows of huge Sequoia trees the traces decked, the trailers were put on and we rolled easily down to the Comstock Mill, and Old Adam. The hill climbing was behind us, and the horses were at leisure.

Old Adam was nine centuries ago when a wicked fire swept up the draw and burned him terribly. Now, thousands of years after his seedling birth and hundreds of years after his heart was destroyed by fire an industrial center has sprung up at his feet. Men have appropriated his domain by means of timber claims. The impressing valley "settling up" has created a need for lumber with which to build homes. A saw mill is here to thin out the salable timber to supply the demand. Bull teams, hauling logs from the woods to the mill over skid roads, picturesquely dot the hill side. A bull team needs no harness. A yoke fits across the necks of each pair of bulls, this is hooked to a heavy chain that in turn is hooked to a big log, or sometimes several of them stretched out. The bulls are pretty sensibly tied together and lift the load with their strong necks and shoulders. A span of six, eight or ten bulls represent a powerful lift. Bill McGee drove one team. He had Bright, Brigham, Buck, Brn. Star and Hank and others. With a sharp good stick he commanded obedience. He got them in motion with a light jab on the rump of each one. They began to lean forward, backs humped, the yokes began to creak, the chains clicked and the loggers' chains straightened out. The bull whacker kept alert. If an animal didn't take a step when the rest did he got a good punch with the end. It reached up over and down on the rear of Mr. Bull. If the team was too reluctant to get in motion McGee managed to get in some quick action. In rapid succession he jabbed heavily each bull's rump and emphasized the job with a staccato

staccato word. They moved evenly into pulling strength. In the morning Bill's voice rang out loud and clear: "Gee! Henry Bright, Brigham, Buck, Brn. Star and Hank with his pet 'tusing up' booster oaths that fascinated us children and horrified some of the more serious elders. By noon the volume of his vocal output was considerably quieted. By quitting time there was only a creaking guttural tone. The logs were hauled to the mill over skid roads. These were constructed of eighteen or twenty-four inch thick logs half buried in the ground. Coming down inclines they were laid length-wise and on smoother places cross-wise. A skid grasper and bumper accompanied each team. They crawled on skid tracks where going was tough. Bill McGee was killed when a log jumped sideways and pinned him to a stump.

Comstock hired Chinamen to do woods work with pick and shovel. He had a Chinaman presiding over the kitchen. Like many Chinamen cooks at that time, he had a long braided "pig-tail". This hair-do was accomplished by shaving all the head but an oval on the crown. From this hair was encouraged to grow its natural length. Strands of long coarse black silk threads were braided in with the hair, to taper off and terminate at the knees, the ankles, or even the floor. When working about the kitchen he swung it up over his shoulder or his arm, to keep it out of the way. A dish wiping cloth often was hung over with the queue pig-tail. He wore a black silk quilted jacket and loose palazzo like trousers. He shuffled around on wooden soled sandals that have embroidered tips over the toes. The heels drag along after so they won't be lost. He is a picturesque figure out in common with most Chinese cooks of the times his kitchen still, quite wouldn't pass 1880 pure food laws. He sprinkled the laundry by filling his mouth with water and spraying evenly and thoroughly, (and some said the bread and pies too.) You didn't approve of the method. Oh no! but you didn't tell a Chinaman that. He resented any interference, and loomed the beam. If you didn't approve, stay out of the kitchen like he told you to, or do the cooking yourself. Since the Chinaman knew when and how to cook, you usually kept him on his kitchen throne.

When we children were settled in camp we began to enjoy to the full this heavenly place, cold spring water, sweet meadow grasses, beautiful tiger lily blossoms,

## "MARK TWAIN"

This was a beautiful tree left by Smith Comstock because it was too large to be handled in his mill, and because he had a sentimental interest in leaving some of the finest big trees. In 1891 (according to booklet of American Museum of Natural History in 1888 according to some local sources) it was felled and seven sections of the trunk were sent to the American Museum of Natural History in New York and the British Museum in London. These sections were the gift of Collis P. Huntington and measured 18 1/2 feet inside the bark and were cut about twelve feet above the ground. Both Museums confirm having these exhibits.

The balance of the tree was used for posts. The "Mark Twain" stump is visited by thousands as it is very near the main entrance to the Giant Grove of Kings Canyon National Park.

## Who Was Van Doorman?

(Continued from Page 4)  
This remarkable curiosity will form a sort of hall and will accommodate about 100 people and will be opened by a swinging door made out of one of the portions of the second section."

Charles Doty of Arroyo Grande and Elmer Doty of Stockton, sons of A. J. Doty, owner of Mountain Home resort and both of whom worked on the tree, confirm the fact that the Van Doorman exhibit was a large section of a redwood trunk hollowed out as described above.

Mr. C. C. Curtis who took the pictures of the World's Fair tree out near General Grant says that he does not recall seeing another exhibit of this nature at Chicago. The one illustrated book about the fair that the writer has seen doesn't show, or mention, any big tree exhibit. Did Doorman's tree

columnine ferns and fragrant aralia, seemed to me a blessing from God above. We skipped and jumped about camp, across the meadow, and to the giant red harked Sequoias. Our happy voices in halloo and song, as we called back and forth to each other, was caught up and echoed from tree to tree. In a diminishing soft toned stream each giant passed the echoes upward about the tree-lined meadow, and on to the hill-sides to caress the bushes and rocks, and the to lay them away in my little girl heart. The memory of those silvery notes of exultation have enriched all the years of my life.

## C. C. CURTIS PHOTOGRAPHER

C. C. Curtis operated a photographic gallery at Big Stamp and Millwood and took many of the fine pictures that we have of the lumbering operations in that area in the 1890's and early 1900's. He was in the mountains eleven summers and during the balance of the year operated in the town of the valley. Usually he would stay only a few weeks in the town. His house was not large enough to support permanent photographic establishments. He mentions being at Traver, Hanford, Esperanza (Kettleman Plains) and was in Porterville in the spring of 1893.

The camera which he used for pictures in the woods weighed, with six plate holders, forty five pounds. 5 x 10 glass plates (W. A. Reed, extra rapid) were used generally. Fine exposures were necessary because of the shaded conditions. Negatives were developed at night in a tent with a red lantern. Prints were made on Albumen paper sensitized by floating on a silver nitrate solution just before using.

Mr. Curtis still has many of the negatives that he took sixty years ago. He has another in with Tulare County History. He was a member of the Kaweah Colony and worked on the road to the mountains. After the break up of the colony he was one of a committee of five to investigate the possibilities of colonization on the Kettleman Plains.

He lives at Long Beach and has just passed his 82nd birthday. He is in good health and occasionally visits friends in the valley.

Robert was another photographer of this area, somewhat later than Curtis, some of whose negatives survive. A. R. Moore was there for a time and later established a shop at Porterville. His negatives were destroyed by fire.

ever get that fair? What happened to it?

This same book tells of a proposal by Tulare people that is real Chamber of Commerce stuff. The plan was to cut two lengths of Big Tree about 45 feet long, fashion them into rail car, Pullman style with dinner. They would serve as residence for visitors after arriving at the fair. Apparently the scheme was given up. Maybe the expense of widening tracks to accommodate a real Big Tree was just too much for even a confirmed Tulare booster.

## From Files Of Porterville Enterprise

In 1948 and 1949 The Farm Tribune, Porterville, reprinted news items from the Porterville Enterprise, a newspaper printed sixty years before. This was when activities were at a peak at Mountain Home and some of the material sheds light on the subject matter of this Bulletin. The Enterprise wording and spelling has been retained.

### Another McKiernan Tree

June 8, 1889. John McKiernan, of Cramer Intends cutting a 26-foot in diameter redwood tree for exhibition sometime this month. This tree is situated near A. J. Doty's Mountain Home summer resort.

August 3, 1889. John McKiernan felled the large tree at Mountain Home that he is to take to Europe, last Friday evening just at dusk. Many were disappointed as only two persons saw it fall. Many campers had gone from Summer Home to watch the work for the past two weeks.

August 31, 1889. John McKiernan, of Pleasant Valley, informs that he will send down his big tree samples to Porterville next week. It is divided into eight distinct pieces which will be banded together when they arrive in Los Angeles where they will be shipped for exhibition.

October 5, 1889. At last, the big tree, "California", which Messrs McKiernan and Davidson have been cutting down in the Redwood forest above Frazier, is ready and will be under way to visit those places where anything from the "wild west" will be welcomed as a curiosity, and shortly, those narrow-minded sceptics who have never seen a genuine Giant of the Redwood groves will have to admit that the fabulous stories told of the world famous but little seen Sequoia gigantes are true.

"California" was cut from a tree growing in the Redwood grove home three quarters of a mile to the east of Frazier's mill and is a portion of a forest giant which grew to a height of some 300 feet and measured some 76 feet in circumference at the base. It has been cut into eight separate pieces each weighing some 1,200 to 1,500 pounds.

John McKiernan and three assistants accompanied "California" to Porterville, where they arrived at about 2:00 P. M. Tuesday. Monday morning will witness the departure of the stump for Visalia where it will be placed on exhibition for the forthcoming fair, after which it is bound for Tulare, Fresno, Merced, San Francisco, Sacramento, San Diego and San Bernardino. Eventually, it will bid a long farewell to its native state and will start for New Orleans via Texas.

(Note: That is all we know about "California". Can anyone complete the record? There is a picture of what is supposed to be the Porterville band standing on a section of redwood such as described above. Is it this exhibit?)

### Frazier-Fraiser-Frasier Road

"Frazier" is used most frequent-

ly in referring to the old mill at Mountain Home. Frazier built a very steep road up the west side of Bear Creek to the mill site. After a short time he went broke and left the area. When he came back he attempted to recover the road in order to charge toll with results reported as follows:

July 13, 1889. The petition presented to the Board of Supervisors. Wednesday last, to declare the Frazier road a County road was acted on. It is now a public highway and W. W. Brown, the road overseer of District No. 1 was thereby ordered and directed to open said road.

July 20, 1889. It appears that after the lawsuit in which Fraiser lost the other day, he took upon himself the responsibility of closing up the road, extending a gate across it, backing up the same by shotgun law.

However on Saturday, last, Roadmaster Brown, in accordance with orders received from the Supervisors, went up and declared the thoroughfare a public road, belonging to the County, and opened it up for public traffic, but Fraiser closed it up the following day, seeing which, Brown came down to Porterville and swore out a warrant of arrest for Fraiser on a charge of obstructing a public highway.

Constable Rose later arrested Fraiser, who was brought before Judge Redd. Fraiser was granted a change of venue to Visalia since he claimed that he could not receive fair play in Porterville.

August 3, 1889. On Sunday the 21st, a mob of about 10 men armed with axes and rifles proceeded from Mountain Home to Camp two on the Fraiser road and proceeded to demolish the gate and fences leading to the Fraiser mill. Mr. Fraiser on the following Tuesday went to Visalia and swore out a warrant for the arrest of the three principals of the gang, Clyde Tyler, W. Sullivan and A. J. Doty, Jr.

Undersheriff White served the warrant on the parties mentioned above on Sunday last. They appeared but were dismissed on the grounds that as the road was a public highway, there was no cause for action.

August 10, 1889. L. B. Fraiser (probably this is the correct spelling) called upon us Monday with a petition signed by over 150 of the most solid and prominent business men and land owners of our district. The petition is addressed to the Tulare County Board of Supervisors and sets forth that Fraiser built the Fraiser road, over which there has been so much wrangling lately.

The petition states that Fraiser is the rightful owner of the road; that it is an act of injustice to take private property for public use without allowing the owner compensation. It also prays for the rescinding of the order of July 10, declaring the road to be a public highway and that Fraiser be recompensed. Mr. Fraiser laid the petition before the Board of Supervisors but we have not heard the results.

September 7, 1889. We hear that no action has been taken by the Board of Supervisors regarding the report of the viewers of the Fraser road. The report favored the abandonment of the road.

### Miscellaneous News

May 11, 1889. Work will commence at Coburn's Mill next Monday. Mr. Coburn has just returned from the city where he purchased some new machinery.

May 18, 1889. Supervisor Newport was in town on Saturday and informed us that he has disposed to his Frazier Mill to Moore and Smith of Stockton.

August 24, 1889. Most of the teams have been taken off of the Coburn Mill road as there is little lumber left to haul at the dump on account of the lower water, there not being enough to carry lumber through the flume to the dump. ("Dump" was end of the flume.)

September 7, 1889. Emil Newan came down from Frazier's Mill where he has been spending a couple of weeks. Jim Tyler and family returned from Frazier's Mill on Wednesday last, where they have been sojourning several weeks.

February 22, 1890. Al Howard and A. J. Doty made a trip to Frazier's Mill last Tuesday. At Harper's ranch they had to resort to snow shoes. Every house they passed on up the road they found broken in from the weight of the snow and several buildings at the mill broken down and damaged to the extent of \$700.

March 1, 1890. Avon Coburn has started up his box factory at Soda Springs and is cutting fence posts.

March 8, 1890. A. J. Doty is trying to have a post office established at his resort called "Mountain Home" near the old Frazier's Mill.

June 3, 1898. G. W. Thomson has opened up a saloon in the mountains, east of the old Fraiser mill. H. F. Timeus went up Monday to take charge.

March 11, 1892. J. J. Doyle, in company with three other gentlemen from Tulare, was up in the redwoods above Coburn's Mill last Thursday and Friday looking at some of the big trees. Their purpose is to obtain one for the World's Fair. They have not made any selection as yet.

May 25, 1900. A traction engine belonging to J. W. Kyle, on its way to the Enterprise mill, fell over the grade opposite the Coburn dump. Monday, a distance of about 1,000 feet and literally smashed to pieces, leaving nothing worth picking up but the boiler.

According to reports the engine has always had bad luck. It was brought overland from Los Angeles by the Kaweah Colony people about 12 years ago and when crossing a stream in the mountains

### POSTS AND GRAPE STAKES

Although this Bulletin deals principally with exhibits and lumber mills, it should be borne in mind that more big trees have been used for posts and stakes, than for lumber. The coast redwood, Sequoia Sempervirens, is superior to Sequoia Gigantica for lumber. Many fallen trees, some of which have probably laid on the ground for decades, made sound posts.

went thru the bridge, remaining in the river for about three weeks.

It was gotten out finally, but when being ferried across the Kaweah river, a cable broke and the flat boat and engine floated down stream, landing on an island. It was afterward released, but when crossing another stream, went through the bridge again. When it finally reached its destination, it was not used as a traction engine but was used as power to cut singles and shakes. We hope its junk rests in peace.

June 8, 1900. The heavier new steam-wagon "Springville" went out Tuesday with 25,000 feet of lumber. It went up the Daunt hill without stopping. Arthur Young thinks the new wagon is a crack-jack.

June 15, 1900. The mammoth new Trilby steam-wagon "Springville" was steaming along in good shape near Globe with 38,000 feet of lumber when a wheel came off one of the wagons.

June 22, 1900. Redwood bark will be placed in the road where the steam-wagon has difficulty catching hold. This bark makes a fine covering for sandy roads and its wearing qualities are very good.

June 29, 1900. Ben and Charles Holt of the manufacturing company were in Springville this week to inspect the work being done by the steam wagon and they were well pleased with its behavior. The steam wagon is now carrying 38,000 feet of lumber a trip and makes three trips a week to Roth Spur. (Strathmore)

August 17, 1900. The New Dillonwood saw mills is a solid neat concern and the way it is put up indicates that the Young Brothers are in the sawing business there to remain awhile.

J. C. Lunegrover of Tulare a student of the University who spent his vacation of the Enterprise Mill, has returned to Berkeley.

October 13, 1900. Hunters tell us that two big grizzly bears still make their home on Mount Maggie across the middle Tule from Mountain Home.

November 23, 1900. J. W. Young was down from the Dillonwood mill, Wednesday. He reports two and one-quarter miles of flume built. He cut 400,000 ft. of lumber this season with 100,000 feet of it to bring down yet. Work will be kept on at the mill during the winter.



1

"GENERAL  
NOBLE"

WORLD'S  
COLUMBIAN  
EXPOSITION

CHICAGO, 1893



7



2



3



4



5



6

1. The "General Noble" and the men who prepared the exhibit. Left to right: Sam Turk, Will Gwin, Dayton Dickey, Jesse Pattee, Capt. Jamison, Burr Mitchell, John Rodkins, Tom Gibson, Creed Archer..  
2. Making undercut 50 feet above ground. 3. The falling tree. 4. Removing the "upstairs".  
5. Preparing the lower set of staves. 6. On the way to Chicago. 7. After the fair the exhibit was set up on the Mall at Washington, D. C. and remained there until 1932-33. The building in the left background is the Smithsonian Institution. All pictures except 7 by C. C. Curtis.



1



2



3



4



5



6



7



8



9

1. A big sawing -- exact location not known. 2. Largest load of lumber hauled from Mountain Home. 3.- 4. Views of "Mark Twain" exhibit. Note two saws braced together. 5. Freiler Mill at Mountain Home in 1896. 6. Neal Van Doorman with part of his exhibit - Mountain Home. 7. A blocked lumber flume, probably from Coburn Mill. 8. Logging on Redwood Mountain for Hayes Mill. 9. Building log chute. Completed chute in background. J. C. Stanfield was foreman of crew.  
Picture 1 by A. R. Moore, 2 & 4 by E. O. Curtis, 6 by Tabor

90's

GAY?



1



2



3



4



5



6



7



8

1. Millwood - lumber stacked awaiting completion of flume to Sanger. Note flume. 2. The Smith Genstock Mill at "Big Stamp". 3. "Advertisement" of Mountain Home resort in Thompson's "Historical Atlas of Tulare County" 1893. 4. Dillanwood, 1904. 5. Hammer Home, 1898. Now Helix Park. 6. "Splitter", a long saw to cut big logs lengthwise so that they would go thru sawmill - Dillanwood. 7. Oxen hauling pine log on chute to Hart Mill. 8. "Centennial" (?) stamp at Mountain Home.  
Picture 1 by C. C. Curtis, 8 by E. M. Redmond.